

Frequently Asked Questions



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WHAT IS THE ST. MARY'S FUND AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR FAMILIES TO CONTRIBUTE TO IT?

The St. Mary's Fund is the single most important philanthropic priority for our school. This Fund supports our community by providing substantial financial support, separate of tuition, to develop and advance our programs. Contributions to the St. Mary's Fund are directed toward our school's highest priorities while augmenting the difference between tuition and necessary programming to cultivate world-sized hearts and world-class minds. This funding is imperative to the health of our school. Healthy funds represent the difference between a solid education and a truly exemplary one, where innovative ideas and state-of-the-art resources for teaching and learning practices are not held back by operating budget constraints.

St. Mary's relies on contributions to the St. Mary's Fund every year from Trustees, parents, grandparents, parents of alumni, faculty and staff. It is our expectation that 100% of our families will partner with us in providing our students with an exceptional educational experience by contributing to the St. Mary's Fund.

WHAT DOES THE ST. MARY'S FUND SUPPORT?

The St. Mary's Fund, formerly known as the Annual Fund, allows us to invest added resources and provide new opportunities that could not be funded through tuition. This represents the difference between a solid education and a truly exemplary one, where innovative ideas and state-of-the-art resources for teaching and learning practices are not held back by budget constraints. The impact of your gift, when combined with the contributions of others is seen in small class sizes, outstanding academics and experiential learning programs, exceptionally dedicated and well-trained faculty and staff, innovative programs, cutting-edge science and technology, enhanced theatre, music and visual arts opportunities, strong athletics program and a beautiful campus environment. A gift to St. Mary's School is a gift to your child's education and growth and to the future of a whole generation of children. A successful St. Mary's Fund campaign helps St. Mary's remain the premier IB educational choice!

WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TUITION AND THE ST. MARY'S FUND?

While every effort is made to keep tuition affordable for our families, tuition covers just 89% of the funds needed to operate the school. Contributions to the St. Mary's Fund are needed to support the enriching programs that makes St. Mary's so special. And, unlike tuition, contributions to the St. Mary's Fund are 100% tax deductible.

HOW DOES GIVING TO THE ST. MARY'S FUND BENEFIT MY FAMILY?

Your gift is a direct investment in your children. Because St. Mary's is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, your gift to the St. Mary's Fund is 100% tax deductible. Think of how few opportunities there are to make a charitable gift that directly benefits your own children. Gifts to this fund sustain our IB curriculum, strengthen our arts and athletics program and provide the tools, technologies and enriching experiences that lead to student success. All St. Mary's Fund dollars raised are used in the current school year to fund programs and educational expenses already being put in place by the school to benefit your children immediately.

The following seven areas represent the core elements of our unique curriculum. Every donor has the ability to choose where to direct his/her gift.

Academic Programs	Athletics
Faculty Professional Development	Science
Faith Development	Fine Arts
Technology and Innovation	

DOES IT MATTER WHEN I MAKE MY CONTRIBUTION?

Yes! A gift made early in the school year is a great advantage because all St. Mary's Fund dollars raised are used in the current school year to fund programs and educational experiences already being put in place by the school to benefit your children immediately. We ask donors to make their contribution or pledge by January 31st, with pledge payments being due by May 31st. Once you have made your annual gift or pledge, you will not receive another St. Mary's Fund solicitation until the next school year.

HOW MUCH SHOULD I GIVE?

How much each family contributes is a personal decision, but we ask that everyone be as generous as possible. Gifts typically range from under \$1,000 to over \$25,000. With \$3,025 as the average parent gift size. While leadership gifts of \$3,000 are crucial to the success of the campaign, every gift of any size has an impact on the students of St. Mary's School. And, unlike tuition, St. Mary's Fund contributions are 100% tax deductible. Think of how few opportunities there are to make a charitable gift that directly benefits your own children.

We encourage **all** of our families to contribute at the highest level appropriate for them. There are opportunities to participate at the various giving levels:

Visionaries Circle \$25,000+	Benefactors \$1,500 - \$2,999
Millennium Circle \$10,000 - \$24,999	Patrons \$1,000 - \$1,499
Head of School Circle \$5,000 - \$9,999	Supporters \$500 - \$999
Sustainers Circle \$3000 - \$4,999	Friends Up to \$499

** All donors are invited to the St. Mary's Appreciation Breakfast in the Spring and listed in the Report on Philanthropy. Donors who give \$3,000 or more are invited to the Leadership Reception the following Fall.*

HOW CAN I DOUBLE MY CONTRIBUTION TO ST. MARY'S?

Many employers will match an employee's gift to a school. Any matching gifts will be combined with yours to determine the giving level at which you will receive recognition. Please contact your employer to ask if your company offers this benefit or St. Mary's Development Office if you have any questions.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE ST. MARY'S FUND AND A CAPITAL CAMPAIGN?

Annual gifts are raised each year from parents, faculty and staff, grandparents and alumni families. These funds are spent within the same fiscal year. Gifts to the St. Mary's Fund help fund the programs and priorities on campus this school year. A capital gift is normally a larger, one-time gift that goes toward projects like new buildings and campus enhancements.

HOW CAN I GIVE TO THE ST. MARY'S FUND?

You can make your contribution by credit card, check payable to St. Mary's School or a pledge for your gift to be paid in full by May 31st. Make your donation or pledge online at www.smaa.org/give. Appreciated stock or mutual funds are also accepted. These gifts can have significant tax advantages. Please call the Development Office for assistance.

WHO SHOULD I CONTACT IF I HAVE ANY ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS?

Please contact Christine Downie, Director of Development at (949) 448-9027 x324 or christine.downie@smaa.org. Thank you for your support of the St. Mary's Fund.